

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ROME 20708 221648Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 CU-02 DHA-02 MCT-01 /086 W
----- 094817 /70

R 221520Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1884
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
US MISSION USNATO 3681
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY SOFIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ROME 20708

FROM AMBASSADOR LODGE'S OFFICE

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, IT, VT, XF, XH, XA
SUBJECT: THE VATICAN AND WORLD POLITICS: POPE'S 1976 ASSESSMENT

REF: ROME (1975) 18947

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ROME 20708 221648Z

1. SUMMARY: IN HIS TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS ADDRESS TO
THE ROMAN CURIA, POPE PAUL ASSESSES SIGNIFICANT
HOLY SEE ACTIVITIES DURING YEAR, TRACES OUTLINES OF
VATICAN POSITIONS ON MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ISSUES,
AND REVIEWS THE "STATE OF THE CHURCH" FOR
1976. IN THIS YEAR'S ADDRESS, POPE PAUL HAS

SELECTED FOR SPECIAL COMMENT THE FOLLOWING
INTERNATIONAL ISSUES: TERRORISM AND RELIGIOUS
OPPRESSION, LEBANON AND MIDDLE EAST, THE ITALIAN
CONCORDAT. END SUMMARY.

2. TERRORISM AND RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION. ON
DECEMBER 20 POPE PAUL IN HIS 1976 CHRISTMAS ADDRESS
TO THE ROMAN CURIA CONDEMNED TERRORISM WHICH
IS "COLDLY ORGANIZED BY OBSCURE FORCES" AND
CRITICIZED THE PENAL SYSTEMS OF SOME COUNTRIES FOR
HAVING BECOME "SCHOOLS FOR DELINQUENTS." A SIMILAR
GENERALIZED CONDEMNATION WAS MADE WITH RESPECT TO
THE "LIMITATIONS, PRESSURES AND SOMETIMES OPPRESSION"
IMPOSED ON THE CHURCH AS AN INSTITUTION OR BELIEVERS
AS INDIVIDUALS IN SOME COUNTRIES IN EUROPE, ASIA,
AFRICA AND AMERICA. THE ONLY SPECIFIC COUNTRY CITED
IS RHODESIA, IN CONNECTION WITH WHICH HE EXTOLS THE
COURAGE OF BISHOP LAMONT FOR FIGHTING AGAINST
OPPRESSION AND RACISM. (COMMENT: IN LAST YEAR'S
ADDRESS (ROME (1975) 18947), THE POPE SPECIFICALLY
MENTIONED THE "HOSTILE CLIMATE" EXISTING IN
CZECHOSLOVAKIA, ROMANIA AND IN CERTAIN REGIONS OF THE
USSR." IN ADDITION TO NOT MENTIONING SPECIFIC
COUNTRIES, IT IS INTERESTING THAT POPE PAUL MAKES
NO ASSESSMENT OF VATICAN OSTPOLITIK IN LIGHT OF
THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT.

3. LEBANON, THE MIDDLE EAST AND JERUSALEM. THE
SECTION ON LEBANON AND THE MIDDLE EAST IS ESSENTIALLY
A RESTATEMENT OF RECENT VATICAN POLICY AND DOES NOT
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ROME 20708 221648Z

PROVIDE ANY NEW IDEAS. WITH RESPECT TO LEBANON,
THE POPE EXPRESSES SATISFACTION WITH PRESENT
PACIFICATION EFFORT, ENCOURAGES LEBANESE LEADERS
TO DIRECT THEIR EFFORTS TOWARD RESOLVING PROBLEMS
WHICH ENGENDERED THE CONFLICT AND TO RECONSTRUCTION,
AND PROMISES VATICAN "COLLABORATION." POPE ALSO
EXPRESSES HOPE FOR THE REESTABLISHMENT OF LEBANON
AS A RESPLENDID EXAMPLE OF COEXISTENCE AMONG
COMMUNITIES WHICH, ALTHOUGH DISTINCT IN RELIGION,
ARE UNITED BY LOVE FOR A COMMON FATHERLAND.

4. WITH REGARD TO MIDDLE EAST IN GENERAL, THE
POPE HOPES THE CONSENSUS AMONG EXPERTS THAT THE
MOMENT SEEMS PROPITIOUS FOR A "NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT"
CORRESPONDS TO REALITY AND THAT THE APPROPRIATE
"AUTHORITIES WILL KNOW HOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT."
HE ALSO EXPRESSES THE HOPE THAT THE PROBLEM WILL BE
RESOLVED "IN SPIRIT OF JUSTICE AND EQUITY" AND

THAT IT WILL ALSO INCLUDE "AN ADEQUATE SOLUTION FOR THE PROBLEM OF THE HOLY PLACES--CHRISTIAN, HEBREW AND MOSLEM--AND IN THE FIRST PLACE THE PROBLEM OF JERUSALEM."

5. THE ITALIAN CONCORDAT. POPE TURNS RECENT GOI PROPOSAL TO REVISE THE 1929 LATERAN CONCORDAT "AN INITIATIVE OF HISTORIC PROPORTIONS" AND RESTATES VATICAN COMMITMENT TO NEGOTIATE A REVISION WHICH WOULD MAKE IT A BETTER INSTRUMENT FOR GUARANTEEING "CORRECT AND AMICABLE RELATIONS BETWEEN STATE AND CHURCH," WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE TO "RELIGIOUS PEACE AND TO THE MORAL AND SPIRITUAL BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE." HE URGES A QUICK CONCLUSION TO THE NEGOTIATIONS.

6. THE "STATE OF THE CHURCH." THE NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF THE ADDRESS WHICH IS DEVOTED TO THE "STATE OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 ROME 20708 221648Z

CHURCH" OUTLINES HIS EFFORTS TO UPDATE THE CHURCH IN ACCORD WITH THE INDICATIONS OF VATICAN COUNCIL II, AND CIRITICIZES THE "CONTRASTING DEVIATIONS" EXISTING WITHIN THE CHURCH WHICH ON THE ONE HAND PROPOSE CHANGE "WITHOUT LIMITS" AND ON THE OTHER "REJECT EVERY CHANGE." POPE PAUL ENDS THIS PART OF HIS ADDRESS WITH A RESOUNDING DEFENSE OF THE "RIGHT OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY." RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, HE STATES, IS NOT BASED ON THE PROPOSITION THAT ALL RELIGIONS ARE MORE OR LESS EQUAL, BUT IS FOUNDED "ON THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON, WHICH REQUIRES THAT THERE BE NO EXTERNAL CONSTRAINTS WHICH TEND TO OPPRESS CONSCIENCE IN SEARCH OF THE TRUE RELIGION AND IN ADHESION TO IT." END UNCLASSIFIED

BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

6. THE POPE'S 1976 ADDRESS HAS A CONDIDERABLY SOFTER TONE THAN THE ONE IN 1975. IN ADDITION TO OMITTING DIRECT REFERENCES TO RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION IN EASTERN EUROPE AND THE LACK OF AN ASSESSMENT OF THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT, THERE IS NO STATEMENT ON THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN THE CHURCH'S DIALOGUE WITH MARXISM AS A POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEM. WE BELIEVE THAT THESE INTERRELATED OMISSIONS ARE EXPLAINED BY SEVERAL REASONS. FIRST, DURING 1976 VATICAN OSTPOLITIK DEVELOPED POSITIVELY IN RELATION TO BULGARIA, ROMANIA AND HUNGARY. SECOND, THE VATICAN HAS RECEIVED DIPLOMATIC PROMISES FROM BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA FOR FORWARD MOVEMENT ON CHURCH-STATE ISSUED

IN THE COMING YEAR. (FINALLY, VATICAN WILL HAVE AN
ADDITIONAL FORUM FOR STATING ITS CASE VIS A VIS HELSINKI IN
THE 1977 BELGRADE CONFERENCE.) THUS, THE VATICAN HAS
DECIDED ON THE GENERALIZED FORMULATION AS IT APPEARS
IN THE POPE'S ADDRESS RATHER THAN RISK ANTAGONIZING THE
SOVIET UNION AND OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES THROUGH
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 05 ROME 20708 221648Z

DIRECT REFERENCES. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. BEAUDRY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPEECHES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ROME20708
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760470-0384
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761220/aaaaarbj.tel
Line Count: 182
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <02 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE VATICAN AND WORLD POLITICS: POPE'S 1976 ASSESSMENT
TAGS: PFOR, IT, VT, XF, XH, XA, (POPE PAUL VI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006